

# IT'S A WISE PLAY THAT KNOWS ITS OWN AUTHOR

## "Eternal Magdalene" Puts Emotionalism in Problem

New Play Attempts to Solve a Civic Question on the Basis of Its Sentimental Aspect Rather Than by a Consideration of the Facts in the Case.

By HEYWOOD BROWN.

Some problems ought not to be presented on the stage. "The Eternal Magdalene" deals with such a problem. We do not object to the play because its subject necessitates the frequent use of "prostitute" and "harlot," although we are free to confess that there are words which fall more pleasingly upon the ear, but because it attempts to solve a social question by means of a merely emotional survey.

"The Eternal Magdalene" asks pity for the scarlet army and a segregated district. The author seems to hold the opinion that anybody who does not believe in the official recognition of prostitution by municipal authorities lacks sympathy for an unfortunate class of women.

The relation between sympathy and segregation is not entirely clear to us, although Mr. McLaughlin has used three acts to bring it out. We are of the opinion that segregation is an excellent plan if it works. Expediency is the question. Doctors and police court magistrates might have something interesting to say about the question. A dramatist can say nothing of moment for the subject under consideration is a matter of statistics.

To run again and again to Scripture, as Mr. McLaughlin does, is hardly to the point. Quotations, however lofty, are hardly likely to solve the question. It must be admitted that Mr. McLaughlin has had the courage to approach the question from the side which is sentimentally unpopular; but his is a sentimental journey just the same and out-distances truth.

For instance, the wife of the philanthropist in "The Eternal Magdalene" reports that she has made a trip through the segregated district and has found that one brothel has harbored an unfortunate young girl, soon to become a mother, who has fled, seeking protection in a bitter world. In another resort there is a sick girl, and the proprietor of the place refuses the offer of medical assistance.

"The tenderloin will take care of its own," is what she said to the wife of the philanthropist. And here the author of "The Eternal Magdalene" reports life as it is not. The tenderloin does not take care of its own. Sentimentality the tenderloin has as thick as rouge, but its sentiment is too thin even for simile.

The ambassador from the scarlet kingdom is quite the most charming person in the show. She is witty, well bred and stocked with an amazing fund of historical and literary lore. Unlike Mrs. Warren, she is ever so proud of her profession, and justifies it with a certain show of eloquence. The persons who work for a closed town are all hypocrites. Here again we do not think that Mr. McLaughlin speaks the truth. His Blanche Dumont is not typical of the tenderloin and his preacher is not typical of the ministry. For our part, we believe, in spite of the best efforts of Mr. McLaughlin, that there is more sincerity under black cloth than red.

To say that certain subjects shall not be treated on the stage is not tyrannical, for, after all, the theatre is not a forum of debate. The drama has almost always demanded a story in terms of emotion, and when problems of fact are introduced into the problem suffers. In the case of "The Eternal Magdalene" we think it is both.

Deliver us from those plays which are held under the auspices of something or other because they are not suitable for public performance. If they are not suitable for public performance, why must they find a stage at all? Whoever has a play of that sort should ask leave to print. He can get it from us.

Some time next week we are to see a private problem play. From the advance notice we learn that in the third act "the boy falls into his first epileptic fit." We are going to see this play, as we said, but, gosh! how we dread it.

To all those who seek the theatre for mental stimulation we recommend "Around the Map." Here at last is a musical show which demands the attention of the most exacting class of theatregoers. Here at last is a performance to which the tired business man can take his mentally alert wife.

### DITRICHSTEIN AT LONGACRE

Makes Bow as Cohan & Harris Star in "The Great Lover."

Leo Ditrichstein, now a Cohan & Harris star, will return to New York Wednesday evening in a romantic comedy called "The Great Lover." In the authorship of this play Mr. Ditrichstein has had at least a couple of fingers, if not an entire hand. Frederick and Fanny Hatton, who wrote "Years of Discretion," will share honors and royalties with the star. The Longacre will be the scene of the premiere.

In Mr. Ditrichstein's support will be Beverly Sigsbee, Camilla Dalberg, Virginia Fox Brooks, Anna McLaughlin, Cora Witherspoon, Madeline Durand, Arthur Lewis, Malcolm Fassett, John Benson, William Riccardi, George E. Romain, Julian Little, Frederick Macklyn, Alfred Kappler, Antonis Salerno, Daniel Shatte, Alexis H. Pollano, Leslie Ryeoff, Lee Miller and others.

### BRAMHALL TO OPEN

Butler Davenport to Try It Again in Miniature Playhouse.

The Bramhall, Butler Davenport's family theatre, at Lexington Avenue and Twenty-seventh Street, will reopen on Wednesday evening with "The Days of Purity." This will be the second season of the Bramhall, which flourished for a brief time last year.

The plays to be presented will be "Courtship of Theo. Now and Tomorrow," a satire in three scenes, by Anna Wynne, and a one-act play by Mr. Davenport, entitled "The Depths of Purity." Mr. Davenport will be seen in both plays, and will be supported by Anna Wynne, Frank Patton, Muriel Hope and Catharine Proctor.

### Loew's American Roof

The bill at the American Roof during the first half of the week will embrace Patrick Calhoun and Martha Russell, in "Types of Stagehands," Frankie Fay, character comedienne; "Soldier Men," a dramatic playlet; the Averys, in a skit, "The Night Porter," Tango Chief, an educated pony; Jack Marley, comedian; Frisco, "wizard of synecdoche," and others. Beginning Thursday, those on the programme will be Dan Bruce and company, "A Corner in Wireless," Fred Holmes and Lulu Wells, with songs and dances; Harry Brown and Pearl Lee, with a musical offering; Imperial Marcho Troupe, presenting an act described as a novelty, and Raymond and Fields. Frankie Fay will be on the bill for the entire week.

### Schiller at German Theatre.

In honor of the birthday of Friedrich von Schiller, which occurs on Wednesday, the Irving Place Stock Company will on that evening produce "Kabale und Liebe." Arnold Korff will be in the cast.

### FRENCH BENEFIT TO-MORROW

Many Artists Volunteer for Performance at Metropolitan.

The Societe Fraternelle des Artistes will receive the proceeds of a huge benefit performance to be given at the Metropolitan Opera House to-morrow night, and for which French and American artists have volunteered their services.

Included on the programme will be Leopold Godowsky, David Bispham, Elsie Janis, Melville Ellis, Irene Bordoni, Maurice Farkas, Andre Torrel, violinist; Marguerite d'Este, in a Brazilian dance; Lillian Greuze, in a sketch; Andre Jery and Claude Benedict, in "Fais ce que Dois"; Paul Capellani, in "Rouget et Lisle"; Mlle. Eymael, of Brussels, who will sing the Belgian national hymn; Mlle. Beriaz, of the Chicago Grand Opera company; Leon Rothier, of the Metropolitan, and others. Nahan Franko's orchestra will conduct.

Lucien Bonheur, director of the Theatre Francais, is in charge of the performance.

### "SECRET SERVICE" AGAIN

Gillette in Famous Thriller at Empire To-morrow.

Following his decidedly successful resurrection of "Sherlock Holmes," William Gillette will bring "Secret Service" back to life at the Empire to-morrow evening. The old melodrama is expected to prove just as virile today as it ever was, and will, in addition, possess timeliness.

For only two weeks will Mr. Gillette play the character of Lewis Dumont, as he must then move on to make room for John Drew. An interesting point in connection with the revival will be the presence of Joseph Brennan in the cast as General Randolph, the part he played in the original New York production of the play.

Others of the company will be cast as follows: Varney, Grace Reals; Edith Varney, Helen Freeman; Caroline Mitford, Irene Haisman; Benton Arrelesford, Edwin Mordant; Martha, Marion Abbott.

### ARNOLD DALY TO-MORROW

Will Be Seen in "The Angel in the House" at the Fulton.

"A new kind of character" is the promise held out by Arnold Daly to his first-nighters at the Fulton to-morrow. Mr. Daly will appear in "The Angel in the House," a play by Eden Philpotts and B. McDonald Hastings, and which has been acted with signal success in London. Mr. Philpotts is well known as a novelist, while Mr. McDonald has contributed to the stage "Sin," a unique drama produced at Wallack's several years ago, and "Belladonna," in which Miss Nazimova acted.

As his leading woman Mr. Daly will have Hilda Spong, seen with him at the Park last season in "Candida." Of but slightly less importance, however, will be Alma Tell, who has already appeared this year in "Cousin Lucy" and "Husband and Wife," and Lorraine Frost. Edithingham Pinto will also be one of the Daly cast.

"Treasure Island" has been in preparation for months, and an excellent production is promised. Some doubt has been expressed as to the possibility of giving the Stevenson classic an adequate presentation in a theatre the size of the Punch and Judy, but Mr. Hopkins states that the trick can and will be done. When the production went to Albany last week two cars of scenery went along.

The playwright, it is understood, has let Stevenson's famous story unwind itself, although he has made a concession to the taste of the modern theatre-goer by weaving in a couple of female characters. The wife of Long John Silver, merely mentioned in the story, is given considerable to do in the play. Mr. Goodman has used ten scenes to tell the story.

In the cast will be Mr. and Mrs. Hopkins, Edward Emery, Tim Murphy, Edmund Gurney, W. J. Ferguson, Frank Silver, Oswald Yorkie, David Glasford, Leonard Wiley, Leonard Grey, Marshall Birmingham, Perry Hopper, F. Cecil Butler, Cecil Magnus, J. H. Greene, Lynn Starling, Herbert Ashton, Adin E. Wilson, Chauncy W. Keim, Charles MacDonald, Benjamin Kaiser, Alice Delmore and Agnes Kemble.

Hilda Spong, who is to play with Arnold Daly in "The Angel in the House."



Leo Ditrichstein & Virginia Fox Brooks in "The Great Lover."

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## Where and Why Plays of the Season Continue

"Hobson's Choice," at the Comedy Theatre, Affords New York a Chance to See a Clever Play Acted by One of the Best Balanced Casts of Season.

By HEYWOOD BROWN.

Comedies. "Hobson's Choice," at the Comedy, is an amusing character play acted with great skill by a well balanced cast. It deals with middle class life in Lancashire. The little play has some broad touches of nuptial humor, but they are not in the least objectionable. Harold Brighouse is the author.

"The Unchastened Woman," at the Thirty-ninth Street Theatre, looks at life through theatrical spectacles, but its technique is more than sound and its emotional effectiveness beyond question. More than that, the play permits Miss Emily Stevens to do the best acting of the season in a brilliant characterization which is heightened by the excellent work of Christine Norman in a contrasting part.

"The Boomerang," at the Belasco, is a delightful light comedy, which concerns itself with puppy love and some other kinds. It is acted by an exceptionally able company, which includes Martha Hedman, Arthur Byron and Wallace Eddinger.

"Abe and Mawruss," at the Lyric, is a continuation of "Potash and Perimeter." There is quite a degree of technical skill in the dramatization, and the characterization is excellent. Barney Bernard as Abe Potash gives a performance which is notable in itself.

"Our Mrs. McChesney," at the Lyric, brings Ethel Barrymore back to light comedy and puts her in the best known characters of fiction on the stage. Although an indifferent play, the piece is not devoid of interest as account of some deft character sketching.

"The Two Virtues," at the Booth, has Edward H. Sothern in a finished performance of a politely humorous play skillfully performed.

"Young America," at the Gaiety, is an ingenious, interesting and decidedly wholesome play about a boy, his dog and some agreeable dwellers in the suburbs. A good cast and a remarkable dog give a fine performance of this delightful play.

"Rolling Stones," at the Harris, is a brisk play about adventure in the world of business. A good cast is headed by the amusing Charles Ragles.

"Quineys," at the Maxine Elliott, is a slow moving, but entertaining little play about an antique shop. It is well acted.

"The New York Idea," which continues with "The Liars" in the repertoire of the Playhouse, is an admirably witty play well acted by an excellent company, which is headed by Grace George.

"Fair and Warmer," at the Eldorado, Comment later.

Farces. "Miss Information," at the George M. Cohan Theatre, is a slight play which affords Elsie Janis a chance to display her manifold talents. The play contains a little music, which is tuneful, and much dancing, which is altogether excellent.

"Hit-the-Trail-Holiday," at the Astor, is a play about Billy Sunday by George M. Cohan.

Problem Plays. "The Eternal Magdalene," at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre, is an attempt to attack a social problem from an emotional standpoint. In spite of the seeming sincerity of the author and some scenes of dramatic power, the play is handicapped by a lack of dramatic craftsmanship. The play keeps Miss Julia Arthur back to the stage after a long absence. Robert H. McLaughlin, a Cleveland newspaper man, is the author.

"Common Clay," at the Republic, is a powerful play, in spite of the fact that it solves a conventional problem in a theatrical manner. Cleve Kinkaid, a young playwright, has succeeded in offering the public what it wants. Possibly his success is due to the fact that he has given an imposing cast of players a chance to act. John Mason and Jane Cowl have a line-up which is of unusual strength.

Melodramas. "Under Fire," at the Hudson, is an interesting play about the Great War, done in the familiar fashion which marked our Civil War school of drama. It took a good looking hero to save Paris, and William Courtenay is the man. Frank Craven contributes an interesting bit of work as a newspaper man.

"The House of Glass," at the Candler, shows that the arm of the law is just a bit more far-reaching than the long arm of coincidence. Both are employed in Max Marcin's play. Mary Ryan is the heroine and has one of the popular tearful parts. There are also two excellent policemen and an engaging crook.

One-Act Plays. A new bill begins at the Bandbox Theatre to-morrow, but the old bill will be played by the Washington Square Players on Friday and Saturday nights. The old bill is well balanced and affords varied entertainment. In particular "Interior," of Masterlinek, is one of the most beautiful things which has been seen in New York. Other features are an amusing play by Philip Moeller, called "Helen's Husband," and a delightful performance by Lydia Lopokova in a fantasy by Percy Mackaye.

Musical Plays. "Around the Map," at the New Amsterdam, is one of the most delightful musical plays which New York has ever seen. It is a proof that a show may be sumptuous but not slow, beautiful but not gaudy, funny without being vulgar and tuneful without being stale. In short, it proves that it is possible to spend a great deal of money on a musical play without wasting it.

"The Princess Pat," at the Cort Theatre, is a dainty show which is distinguished by the excellent music of Victor Herbert and the pleasing performance of Eleanor Palster in the chief role.

"Chin-Chin," at the Globe, with Montgomery and Stone, has aged not a bit in spite of the length of its run in New York.

"Alone at Last," at the Shubert, is dowered with a magnificent score by Franz Lehar. The music is well sung. The book lags behind the score.

"Town Topics," at the Century, is a large scale vaudeville, with a number of well known specialists to furnish the amusement. Among these are the delightful Will Rogers, Trickle, Gonzales, Peter Page, Burt Leslie and Elsie Moynihan.

"The Blue Paradise," at the Casino, has an amusing book and one or two good musical numbers. Cecil Lord and Cleo Mayfield do well in the principal roles.

"The Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic," at the New Amsterdam Roof, is light entertainment designed for after the theatre parties.

Gamut Club Programme. The Gamut Club, of which Mary Shaw is president, will give its first programme of the season at the club quarters, 69 West Forty-sixth Street, one week from to-night. Three plays will be given, with well known players in the casts.

Comedies at Bandbox. Washington Square Players introduce System of Repertory.

A new programme of one-act plays comes to the Bandbox Theatre to-morrow, and with it a slight change of policy. Announcement is made that the plays already seen will be retained in the repertory, and will be performed Friday and Saturday evenings and Saturday afternoons. The old bill includes "Fire and Water," "The Antick," "Interior" and "Helen's Husband."

The new plays of the Washington Square Players are comedies, all of them. Four languages have been drawn upon to furnish the four plays. Alice Gerstenberg, author of the dramatization of "Alice in Wonderland," is the only American playwright to be included.

From the French has come Alfred de Musset's "Widows," and from the Italian "The Honorable Lover," by Robert Bracco. Both of these have been translated by Ralph Roder, of the Washington Players. Arthur Schnitzler's "Literature," translated by Elsie Plaut, completes the bill.

Three weeks more remain of the record run for D. W. Griffith's spectacle, "The Birth of a Nation," at the Liberty Theatre.

The film which puts preparedness into a story continues at the Vitascope Theatre. "The Battle Cry of Peace" shows what might happen if New York City was captured by the enemy.

## Old Films and New On the Screens This Week

With the Fighting Forces of Europe, a series of natural color motion pictures illustrating the vicissitudes of the great world strife, will begin its second week at the Park Theatre Monday.

Marguerite Clark will be seen in "Still Waters," the latest Famous Players release, on the Paramount Theatre during the coming week.

The Strand Theatre offers another film play this week, the story of which has been made famous in a grand opera, novel and play. John Luther Long's immortal "Madame Butterfly" is the attraction, and popular Mary Pickford will be seen in the title role.

The Motion Picture Clinic and descriptive lecture by Dr. Kurt Schlosing on the subject of the merits and advantages of the Freiburg method of Twilight Sleep treatment in maternity cases begins its last week of the engagement at the Forty-fourth Street Theatre this afternoon.

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